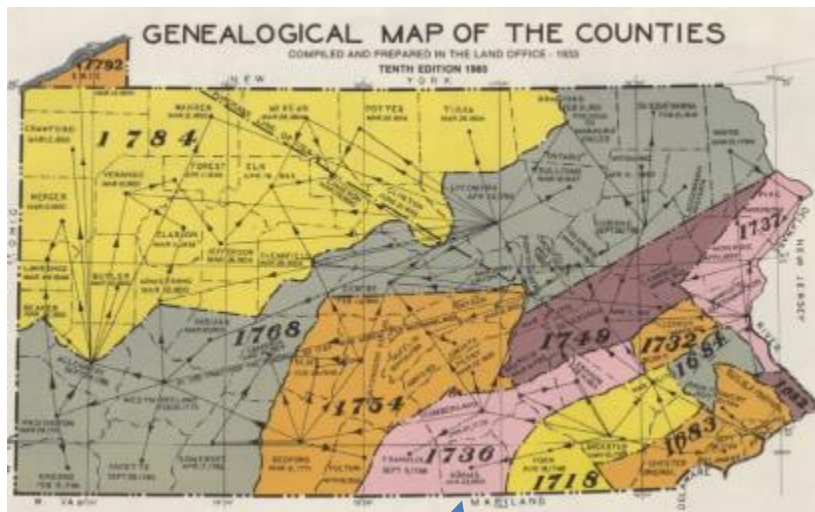# Notes on Blunston Licenses

From Presentation by Aaron McWilliams, Archivist
Pennsylvania State Archives
Presentation Made at South Central Pennsylvania Genealogical Society Meeting – May 5, 2019
Recorded by Dale Keagy

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- William Penn died in 1718; land treaties with Native Indians ceased until sons Thomas, John, and Richard re-established a bond of trust with them. Penn's policy not to create English settlements in Native American lands until treaties were reached remained in place.

- Although Pennsylvania had a largely undefined western border, as a practical matter that border was the Susquehanna River because the Penns had yet to reach a treaty with the Native Indians on the western side. Around 1730 the Penn brothers decided to expand the Pennsylvania settlement across the Susquehanna with intention of reaching the Kittochtinny (now the Kittatinny) mountain range. In modern day geography, this meant expanding to York, Cumberland, and Franklin counties.

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Targeted Expansion"

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- At the same time, the Penns were having a dispute with Marylanders over land in the southern border, particularly in the area of the proposed expansion. Pennsylvania's southern border was not commonly recognized on the ground although clearly enumerated in the respective charters to William Penn (Pennsylvania) and Lord Calvert (Maryland). The defined border was the 40th parallel, but early settlers were not sure where that was. When in the 1680s it was discovered that Philadelphia – which represented most of Pennsylvania's settlement - was, in fact, below the 40th

parallel and legally a part of Maryland, negotiations ensued resulting in a re-drawing of the line at 15 miles below the 40$^{th}$ parallel.



- This new border agreement resolved the Philadelphia problem and, through deeds, patents, and land improvements, Chester County/Lancaster County southern borders were generally understood. The southern border across the Susquehanna remained in dispute. With the technology of the day, both the 15-mile mark and the location of the 40$^{th}$ parallel from which it would be measured remained – in large part – a mystery in the field.

- In the 1730s the exact border location became an immediate concern because aggressive Maryland land agents – notably the ethically challenged Thomas Cresap – where selling land in Pennsylvania west of the Susquehanna and using brutal tactics against Penn's sheriffs attempting to evict what the Penns viewed as illegal residents.  Marylanders were settling north of the agreed upon border and there was no established "law and order" arm to stop them. The Penns feared that if the Marylanders established a viable sustained presence in the area, it would become theirs – formal border agreement or not. Pennsylvania's legal response was also limited because of its self-imposed requirement of reaching a treaty agreement with Native Indians before selling Pennsylvania Land; the Marylanders placed no such restraint on themselves.

- The Penns commissioned Samuel Blunston – a Lancaster County surveyor – to explore the land from the Susquehanna to the Kittatinny range and create maps that could be used in future land sales. Blunston completed his assignment over several trips in 1732 and 1733. This survey was in anticipation of the Penns reaching a treaty; they wanted to be ready to sell the land and effectively push the Marylanders south and establish the border with a physical presence of legitimate settlers.

- This is not to say that there weren't Europeans west of the Susquehanna; there were. Blunston found about forty mostly illegal European settlers in his explorations and several Lancaster County settlers – e.g.Wright, Patterson, and Logan – were openly transacting business, settling, and farming in the western side. But the Penns were not actively issuing warrants and patents in the expansion area.

- As a stop-gap measure, Blunston created a pre-warrant system, and between 1734 and 1735 issued 284 "licenses" to future settlers. A "Blunston License" established rights to a claim in the new land, but did not establish ownership. In effect, it was a reservation of land in anticipation of the issuance of a warrant, a survey, a return, and a patent. Blunston's scheme was outside the

mainstream of understood land sale practices, but it was an attempt to establish viable land claims in the targeted expansion area under unusual conditions.

- The Penns reached a treaty with the Six Nations in 1736 and the Pennsylvania settlement expanded as planned.

- With the opening and active land sales, rightful territory was established for the Penns. Disputes remained between the new settlers, squatters, and unsuspecting Marylanders duped by Cresap. But there was a legitimate land ownership process in place and Pennsylvanians following the proper land purchasing process prevailed.

- The licenses were free, however prudent licensees paid for surveys in anticipation of eventual purchase. The licenses were freely transferrable. After the treaty, the concept of "land licensing" was obsolete and no more licenses were issued.

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## Notes on the Hans Kagi Connection to Blunston Licensing
## Based on *The Search for Hans Kagi's Land*
### *(Not a Part of the McWilliams Presentation but representative of my personal interest in Blunston Licenses.)*
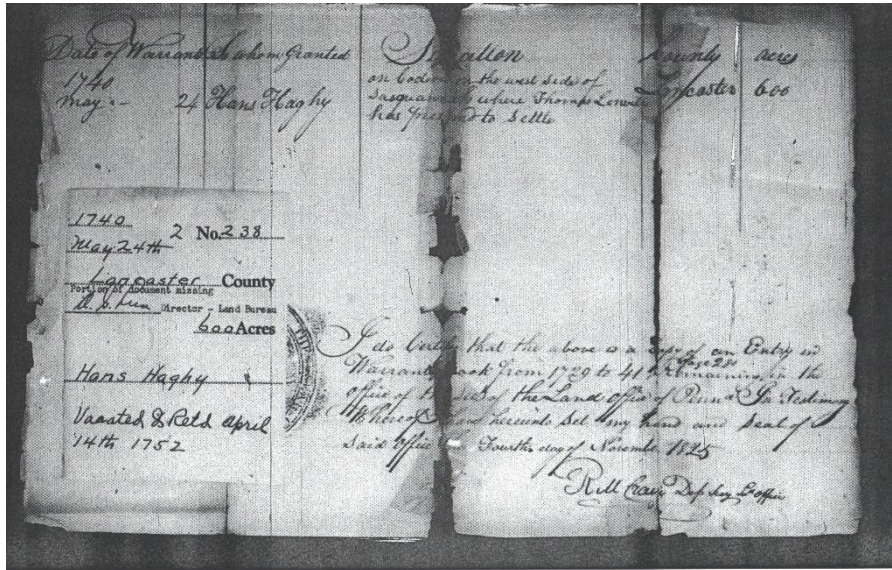
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- Hans Kagi Purchased a Blunston License in 1734/5

**Figure 19: Blunston License Register – Hans Kagi Purchase – 1734/35.**

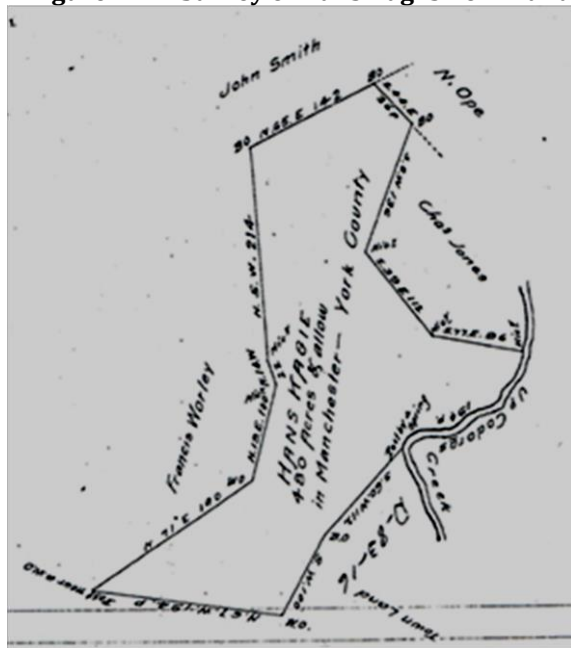| Figure 20 – Blunston Register Transcription | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| March 4 (1734/35) No Survey | Hans Kaighe | 600 (acres) | On the West Side of the Codurus where Thomas Linore first settled having purchased his Improvement |

- Hans did begin the formal land acquisition process after the treaty and obtained a warrant for his "reserved" land in 1740. Although it will never be known for sure, it is certainly implied that he was active on the land. 600 acres was a comparatively large tract, and it would seem that he purchased it in consideration of his growing family of four sons. His oldest – Jacob – would have been around 20 at the time of all this and Hans had three other sons – Abraham, Henry, and Rudolph/Richard. Hans owned 400 acres in (modern) Pequea Township,

Lancaster County. The York land purchase could have been in anticipation of their needing a livelihood upon attainment of adulthood.
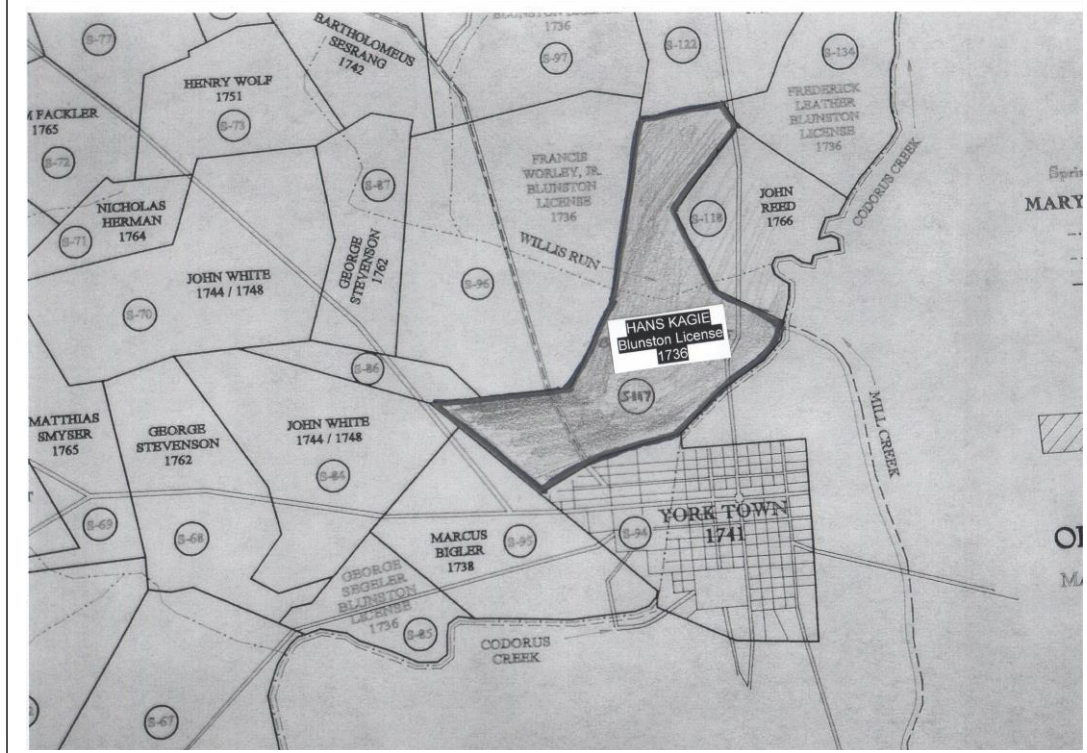


- Pursuant to the warrant, Hans had his Blunston land surveyed, another step indicating his clarity of purpose in eventual land ownership..



Figure V-4 – Survey of Hans Kagi's York Land

- Hans died in 1748 and left the land to his sons Jacob and Rudolph. They subsequently sold the York land to John Wright, James Wright, and William Willis. Willis eventually bought the Wrights claim and built the *Willis House,* which still stands and is on the National Historic Registry. Willis was a brickmaker, whose product was used in many Colonial structures, including the Colonial Courthouse, where the Continental Congress met during the Revolutionary War after the Congress fled Philadelphia. The Articles of Confederation were signed there.



Figure V-5 – Hans Kagi York Location – 480 Acres

- A listing of the Blunston licenses follows. Note that Hans Kagi (Kaighe) stands out as seemingly the lone Palatine Mennonite among the group. Also note that the land around Hans in York County was notably "English." This is contrast to Hans Lancaster County lands, which were embedded in the Pennsylvania German community there.

- A few other interesting connections (or meaningless trivia) related to this topic:

  o James Patterson also purchased two (2) Blunston Licenses. Patterson's daughter, Rebecca, is **incorrectly** identified as Hans Kagi's spouse in Franklin Keagy's history of the Keagy family. This error is perpetuated in countless on-line Keagy family trees.  See *The Search for Hans Kagi's Spouse* at www.kagyhistory.org.  Hans married Anna (Nancy) Kendig.

  o Benjamin Chambers also purchased a license. Rebecca Patterson's sister Sarah married Chambers.

- o Blunston died without an heir. He left his estate to John Wright's daughter – the same John Wright involved in the purchase of Hans' land from Hans' sons.
- o Hans York land comprises much of what is now North York Borough. It is now fully , but includes the borough park, York High School's athletic facilities, and the historic Prospect Hill Cemetery.

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BLUNSTON LICENSES

| Name | Page | Other Information |
|------|------|-------------------|
| Akins, William | 21 | . |
| Anderson, Richard | 28 | . |
| Anderson, William | 3 | . |
| Ashton, Peter | 22 | . |
| Ashton, Richard | 5 | . |
| Atchton, James | 27 | . |
| . | . | . |
| Bacon, Martin | 34 | . |
| Bacxter, John | 10 | . |
| Barnes, Elisha | 15 | . |
| Beaty, Francis | 25 | . |
| Beard, John | 19 | . |
| Berry, James | 22 | . |
| Black, John | 13 | . |
| Blyth, William | 23 | . |
| Boner, Francis | 24 | . |
| Bougher, Martin | 23 | And Oswald Hosteller? |
| Boyd, John | 8 | . |
| Brady, Patrick | 14 | . |
| Brakenrig, James | 20 | . |
| Breda, William | 25 | . |
| Brinnian, Thomas | 24 | . |
| Brown, Thomas | 6 | . |

Buchanon, Robert 4    4        .

.        .        .

Cahoon, John  14        .

Caine, Robert  17        .

Calverson, Andrew     25        .

Campbell, Charles    8        .

Campbell, Gilbert    4        .

Campbell, William    8        .

Campbell, William    22        .

Casney, John   7        .

Carley, William        12        .

Carnaham, William    22        .

Carr, John       12        .

Carthey , Alexander    4        .

Carthey, Archibald    5        .

Carthey, Samuel    4        .

Caton, Thomas        24        .

Chambers, Samuel    1        .

Chambers, Benjamin  3        .

Chambers, Robert    4,5        .

Chambers, Samuel    8        .

Clark, Kames  11,26    .

Clark, William9        .

Coebourn, Francis    13        .

Coebourn, Jonathan    18        .

Collin, John    5        .

Cox, John       16        .

Cox, John, Junior    17        .

Cox, Thomas  17        .

Craig, William8,15,26        .

Crunkleton, John    16        .

Crunkleton, Joseph    16        .

Crunkleton, John    16        .

| Name | | |
|---|---|---|
| Crunkleton, Joseph | 16 | . |
| Crawford, James | 20 | . |
| Crawl, Christian | 30 | . |
| Curtis, Robert | 9 | . |
| . | . | . |
| Daugherty, William | 10 | . |
| Davenport, Isaac | 2,11 | . |
| Davison, John | 11 | . |
| Davis, John | 1 | . |
| Davison, William | 9 | . |
| Day, John | 7 | . |
| Dixon, Joseph | 26 | . |
| Donnel, Thomas | 26 | . |
| Dougherty, Patrick | 21 | . |
| Dunbar, John | 21 | . |
| Dunlap, Andrew | 9 | . |
| Dunbar, William | . | . |
| Dunning, Ezekiel | 13 | . |
| Dunning, James | 13 | . |
| Dunning, Robert | 12,20 | . |
| . | . | . |
| Ebert, Hans Michael | 11 | . |
| Echet, Conrad | 1 | . |
| Edminston, Robert | 18 | . |
| Edminston, Thomas | 18 | . |
| Edminston, William | 12 | . |
| Elliot, William | 13 | . |
| Endlep, Abraham | 6 | . |
| Eustice, Matthew | 18 | . |
| Evans, Simon | 21 | . |
| . | . | . |
| Farley, William | 28 | . |
| Fillerton, William | 27 | . |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Fisher, Thomas | 3 | . |
| Fisher, Samuel | 3 | . |
| Forster, James | 5 | . |
| Forsyth, John | 27 | . |
| Frazier, Alexander | 15,18 | . |
| Freebourn, Robert | 16 | . |
| Fremond, Henry & James | 10 | . |
| . | . | . |
| Gap, John | 2 | . |
| Garrison, Eliakin | 7 | . |
| Garrison, John | 7 | . |
| Garrison, William | 7 | . |
| Given, Samuel | 11, 4 | . |
| Gopet/Goset , John | 19 | . |
| Gladell, John | 19 | . |
| Grimes, Francis | 8 | . |
| . | . | . |
| H, Nathan | 7 | . |
| H...., Corden | 6 | Not found |
| H...., Francis | 7 | Not found |
| Hamilton, George | . | . |
| Hamilton, James | 28 | 28 | . |
| Hamilton, John | 22 | . |
| Harland, Moses | 17 | . |
| Hariston, Peter | . | . |
| Harris, John | 5, 6 | . |
| Heald, John | 15 | . |
| Heald, Thomas | 14 | . |
| Hendricks, James | 2 | . |
| Hendricks, Samuel | 5 | . |
| Herburger, John | 13 | . |
| Heron, James | 7 | . |
| Hodgson, George | 17 | . |

Hogshead, James 12 .

Hogshead, John 9 .

Hood, Samuel 27 .

Hopewell for minister . There was a Hopewell Church above Carlisle

How, William 27 .

Hughes, Jonathan 17 .

Hunter, John 11 Not in index

Hunter, John 11

Husey, John 7 Not found

Huston, David 18 18 .

. . .

I...., Arthur 7 . Not found

. . .

Johnson, James 16 .

Jones, John 25 .

. . .

Kaighe, Hans 13 .

Kerr, Michael 25 .

Killgore, Robert 10 .

Killough, 5 Page 5 missing

Killough, David 10, 16 .

Killough, John & David 22 .

Killough, Samuel 22 .

Killougon, Charles 5 .

Killrgh, John 5 .

. . .

Lawrence, John 2 .

Lawson, Francis 8 ,

Lawson, John 14 ,

Lawson, William 8 ,

Leper, James 2 .

Lee, John 5 .

Lefebre, Isaac 14 .

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Lenard, William | 26 | . |
| Lewis, Jesse | 10 | . |
| Litle, William | 26 | . |
| Loghlin, James & sons | 27 | . |
| . | . | . |
| Martin, James | 6 | . |
| Mcavalaly, Edward | 25 | . |
| McAllister, Archibald | 10 | . |
| McCormab\ck, John | 4, 2 | . |
| McCowan, John | 3, 2 | . |
| McDaniel, William | 21 | . |
| McGill, John | 23 | . |
| McKee, Thomas | 9 | . |
| McKenher, John | 11 | . |
| McFarland, John | 1 | . |
| McMullen, Wm & Hugh | 2 | Not found |
| McSwain, Neil | 19, 22 | . |
| Micheltree, James | 4 | |
| Miller, Andrew | 20 | |
| Miller, John | 22 | . |
| Miller, Robert | 1 | . |
| Milliken, Robert | 1 | |
| Millikin, John | 28 | . |
| Moon, John | 25 | . |
| Moor, Benjamin | 9 | . |
| Morgan, Morgan | 6 | . |
| Morison, Samuel | 18 | Page Not found |
| for use of Minister | 2 | . |
| . | . | . |
| Napier, Ralph | Page torn | |
| Nelson, Nathaniel | 11 | . |
| Nichols, Edward | . | Page torn |
| Nisvel, Allin | . | Page torn |

| Robinson, William | 23 | 23 | . |
| Rudduck, William | 17 | 17 | . |
| Rutherford, James | 8 | 8 | . |
| Rutherford, John | 8 | 8 | . |
| Rutherford, Robert | 8 | 8 | . |
| . | . | . | |
| S...., James | 10 | Not found | |
| Sambeard, Mathias | 2 | . | |
| Say, James | 3 | . | |
| Segden, Robert | 13 | . | |
| Shelby, Evan | 20, 24 | at Walnut Point and at Rocki Spring | |
| Shepard, Soloman | . | . | |
| Smith. William | 11 | . | |
| Somerfield, Francis | 3 | . | |
| Springle, Michael | 4 | . | |
| Subby, John | . | Not found | |
| Swamsey, John | 6 | . | |
| . | . | . | |
| Thonpson, William | 8 | . | |
| Thompson, John | 16 | The minister | |
| Todd, James | 13 | . | |
| Tremble, John | 12 | . | |
| . | . | . | |
| Wakely, James | . | . | |
| Wakely, William | 16 | . | |
| Walker, Joseph | 6 | . | |
| Walker, William | 3 | . | |
| Wallack, Michael | 32 | . | |
| Westler, Woobric | 32 | . | |
| Wetman, William | . | . | |
| Wigle, Martin | 31 | . | |
| Wilkin, Gabriel | . | . | |
| Wilkin, Peter | . | . | |

Wilkin, Robert.            .

Williams, Daniel        13        .

William, Lewis &Thos David.            May be misplaced in the Index

Wilson, James .            .

Wilsonsover, S.        30        Numbers of 30 or more are from the Thomas Penn list.

Winchester, Willoughby            .            .

Worley, Francis, Jr.    33        .

.        .        .

Young, Thomas            .            .

            .            .

end of Blunston list.